

**What is claimed is:**

1. A method of determining specific identifiers fixed onto a pin array of a base component affixed to a primary device wherein each of said identifiers has a plurality of holes therethrough with said base component's pins passing through each of their respective holes aligned therewith such that said identifier can be pressed onto said pin array, a pin detector associated with at least one hole in said identifier for the detection of said aligned pin passing therethrough with each configuration of holes having pin detectors associated therewith being unique to each identifier along any single pin's vertical axis and said identifier being in communication with said primary device, and comprising the steps of:

- a) defining for each of said pins in said pin array a format such that each pin has a unique location within said array of pins;
- b) polling each pin in the array to determine which of said pin locations are detected by said pin detectors;
- c) assembling said detected locations in a set containing individual pin locations in the defined format;
- d) obtaining a first location from the set of detected locations and retrieving from a database a list of known identifiers having one location matching said first detected location;
- e) comparing the remaining locations of each of said retrieved identifiers with those non-flagged locations in the set of detected location in order to find a single identifier whose stored locations comprise a proper subset of the set of detected locations and retaining information about said retrieved matching identifier;
- f) flagging those location in said set of detected locations matching said proper subset of stored locations associated with said retrieved matching identifier as having been accounted for;

g) repeating steps d through g until all locations in the set of detected locations have been flagged as having been accounted for or alternatively no more identifier locations in said database of stored identifier locations comprise a proper subset of those non-flagged locations remaining in the set of detected locations; and

h) in the event wherein no more identifier locations in said database of stored identifier locations comprise a proper subset of those non-flagged locations remaining in the set of detected locations, initiating a predefined procedure which serves to indicate that an error condition has occurred.

2. A method as defined in claim 1 wherein said step of flagging comprises the step of deleting matching locations from the set of detected locations.

3. A method as defined in claim 1 wherein said predefined format comprises (x,y) locations corresponding to the location of each pin in the array of pins.